

Druid Fountain Neighbourhood Watch

Notes of AGM on 17th January 2016

Subject: Druid Fountain Neighbourhood Watch and Residents' Association – Annual General Meeting 2016	Ref: 2016/Notes/001
Date: 17/01/16	Location: Stoke Bishop Village Hall
Attendance: 27 Residents (inc. Road Wardens) + Treasurer, Deputy Chair, Councillor Goulandris, and Chair Bristol Neighbourhood Watch Network Wendy Hull = 31 + 2 Guests	

<u>No.</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Remarks/Action</u>
1	Apologies Gay Huggins and Graham George (who then arrived, albeit after the start of the meeting)	
2	Welcome and Address The meeting started at 2.30. The Treasurer Keith Bonham reminded the attendees that the meeting was to decide upon the future of our organisation. He added the personal view that the Watch and Association made a positive contribution to Community spirit and cohesiveness, and information gathering and dissemination, and it would be a great shame if this was lost. The Minutes of the January 2015 meeting were not discussed until the end of the meeting, but were agreed without questions arising as to the fact that they were a true record of that meeting. The Treasurer remarked that he had not prepared a final account for the year ending December 31 st 2015 as this would be duplicated as a Closing Account should the Watch and Association be wound up and the funds distributed. No subscription had been collected in September 2015 by design. The bank account showed a current positive balance of £185.33 . The Treasurer then called upon Councillor John Goulandris to give his annual "State of Bristol" address.	
3	Guest Speaker – Councillor John Goulandris (Stoke Bishop) Cllr Goulandris covered the following points (with discussion from around the room) 2015 General Election: Bristol North West returned Charlotte Leslie again. It is a marginal constituency. Mayoral and Councillor Elections: To be held in May. Everyone up for election – not 1/3 rd as before. Also Election of Police and Crime Commissioner. Maybe in 4 years' time the "experiment" of having an elected Mayor will be tested and we can say if we want to continue the experiment.	

	<p>Council Tax: Likely to be a 1.95% increase in April. Also could be an up to 2 % extra levy for Health and Social Care.</p> <p>Stoke Lodge: Good to see the new playground so well used and popular. It was a long time coming. The Adult Learning Service is OK for the present. This is an election year so it is likely to be OK this year but expect future battles, especially if the Town and Village Green application is not successful. Outcome of the TVG is eagerly awaited.</p> <p>Coombe Dingle Sports Centre: About to put in a Planning Application for new buildings and all weather surface and floodlighting changes we understand.</p> <p>901 bus: Has proved more popular with local residents now that it stops in more places, but still not used that much and as it is subsidised it may be lost. The contract is due for renewal in September so OK until then.</p> <p>No 4 bus: Time keeping has improved with the parking restrictions on Stoke Road in place. Saturdays still a problem.</p> <p>Downs and Clifton parking schemes: could well have knock on effects in Stoke Bishop. Bring any particular problems to John’s attention.</p> <p>Residents’ Parking Scheme in Stoke Bishop: May be considered by some to be a possible answer for local residents – but many people still object to paying to park in their own roads. Still it could become the only way to be able to find space for householders and their visitors to park.</p> <p>B&W Sports Field now taken over by Avon Wildlife Trust: Good. Just great to see the large crescent of green space in the river valley – OSPNR, AWT and the Woodland Trust behind Bishop’s Knoll. The new trees will grow!</p> <p>Shops: Use them or lose them!!!!!!!!!!</p> <p>Wider Patch: We shall be inconvenienced by the traffic from the new South Gloucestershire developments in Filton, Patchway and at Cribbs Causeway, and have to cope with the population increase coming in to and using Bristol. Much disquiet expressed in the hall that S Glos will get all the Council Tax to spend and we’ll get all the bother! We should plan for absorbing S Glos and N Somerset back in to Bristol as one Authority, but single tier this time.</p> <p>Parking Enforcement: We have new lengths of double yellow lines to make junctions safer, but not much enforcement. Similarly the new lines on the Downs will need enforcing if they are to work.</p> <p>Councillor Goulandris was thanked for his contribution. He elected to stay for the rest of the meeting.</p>	
4	<p>The Treasurer then invited the other Guest Speaker, Wendy Hull, to address the meeting.</p>	
	<p>Wendy Hull is Chair of the Bristol Neighbourhood Watch Network www.bristolnhwnetwork.org.uk Wendy described briefly her past work with the police and how she was an administrator for the Neighbourhood Watch in the north of</p>	

	<p>Bristol. Now in retirement she acts as Chair of the Bristol Neighbourhood Watch Network. She represents Neighbourhood Watch on the Neighbourhood Partnership NP3, serving Stoke Bishop, Henleaze and Westbury. As Chair of Bristol NHW Network she sits on the national body - Our Watch - with the SW Region representative.</p> <p>Wendy had been briefed about the situation in which we now find ourselves with a Committee that has largely resigned. This is due more to length of service without an opportunity to stand down rather than any dissatisfaction with the organisation, although general apathy among the membership has been cited as a contribution towards their decision to stand down.</p> <p>Wendy told us that having a Neighbourhood Watch that was too big was always going to be very difficult to administer and could lead to it not working effectively. Ideally a Watch should be one street or even only part of a street. It was about Community rather than just being about Crime. Ideally a small Watch was administered by a NW Coordinator who knew the neighbours and could notify problems in both directions from police to residents and from residents to police. If we really did not want to break up – because we explained we were also a Residents’ Association - then perhaps we could consider having Watches with Coordinators in each street, working as a team or coming together under an umbrella organisation which is perhaps the Residents’ Association. There could be economies of scale having perhaps one Newsletter for example, with each road/part road reporting.</p> <p>More regulation is coming to Neighbourhood Watch. Coordinators will need to register with the National Network – The Neighbourhood and Home Watch Network www.ourwatch.co.uk – to be able to use the Logo, the Street signs and benefit from the Public Liability Insurance. But this takes only a few minutes and costs nothing. There are few other requirements – for example there is no need to hold regular meetings if people are in touch. If a watch registers with the National network then it is a good idea to register with the local network too which brings the added benefit of getting crime updates to cascade (more later).</p> <p>Several members, including the writer of these notes, stated that the membership should be encouraged to give their e mail addresses, if they have them, to their coordinators. Coordinators – currently our Road Wardens– could manage to alert and inform perhaps one or two non e mail users, typically but not exclusively the elderly, but really cannot undertake to do mail drops on many addresses in the form of frequent newsletters for example. (note - for over 200 properties we have about 50 e mail addresses, and about a quarter of those are the Committee and Road Wardens – no wonder we are not in touch very well!)</p>	
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	<p>Wendy went on to tell us that our current Police and Crime Commissioner Sue Mountstevens was a big supporter of Neighbourhood Watch, and that although Stoke Bishop had no current PCSO, and the residents regard this as being under served , our Beat Manager Jeanette Cadden really does want us to report to her any problems. We would need to be sensible about how to report. She does have a mobile telephone number we could discover. Or there is 101 to dial, and obviously in an emergency there is 999. For some problems we could attend a Beat Surgery. Go to www.avonandsomerset.police.uk, put in your postcode and find out when and where the next Beat Surgery will be held. (note - do check again just before you go, as they do change- personal experience).(further note - the Bristol Neighbourhood Watch Network website does give advice as to when to choose 999 and when to choose 101).</p> <p>Ringmaster etc. There used to be a system of alerts called Ringmaster. This was stopped (one of the cuts) and its replacement Community Alert did not last long either. There is a new administrator in place – Nicholas Simmonds (?spelling) and come September we should have a new system in place which coordinators (if we have them) could arrange to be in touch with and then disseminate news and alerts – because we shall have all the e mail addresses too, operating a cascade! The local NW Network will also contact Coordinators with crime news if the Watch is registered with the organisation.</p> <p>Wendy told us that the problem of the “Nottingham Knockers” has arisen again. If you are bothered by such gentlemen trying to sell you expensive poor quality household goods from holdalls at your front door then ask them for their Pedlar’s Licence, and ask them if they have registered with the local police station. If no satisfactory answers given to either question then inform the police. They can be aggressive and abusive if sent away - and 999 would be appropriate for that.</p> <p>If you see that the more elderly and vulnerable seem to be targeted by cold callers for house services, home improvements etc. then check with those people afterwards if they really wanted the service - be neighbourly. Contact Jeanette Cadden if needs be - she might be willing to call if you are not.</p>	
5	<p>The Treasurer then gave a Vote of Thanks to the outgoing Chair Alfred Pope and the outgoing Secretary Hazel Newman, (and before her Mark Stickland). There was much applause in gratitude for their past efforts and contribution.</p>	
6	<p>There then followed a general discussion as to what we should do about and with our DFNW. Should we let it go or should we try to revive and re-work it? The discussion was wide ranging and most of the attendees took part. There was a general mood of optimism – we really should try</p>	<p>Steering Group Chair is to be Martin Farrell - mariette@mfarrell.co.uk</p>

	<p>to revive and rebuild the organisation, but we continued to want both – a Watch and a Residents’ Association. The meeting went on (and on!) and it became apparent that no conclusion was likely to be reached on that day.</p> <p>So two new volunteers stepped forward to take on the roles of Chair and Secretary of a Steering Group which would meet and discuss ways of setting up an organisation that could meet the requirements being expressed by the attendees. The model which appeared to be the most appealing was one whereby each street became a Watch with a registered coordinator and “reported” to, and was supported by, an umbrella organisation which was the Residents’ Association.</p> <p>The Steering Group should report to another meeting of DFNW in six months’ time.</p> <p>Keith Bonham is willing to continue as Treasurer. Mark Stickland is willing to continue as Webmaster – provided that he gets given the material!</p>	<p>Steering Group Secretary is to be Chris Harries - chris.harries@bristol.ac.uk</p>
6	<p>After the meeting Stephanie e mailed all the current Road Wardens with this message “I think that the steering group will need to know how many of the Road Wardens are prepared to continue their efforts. Quite what this will entail depends very much upon what evolves from the Steering Group. It could just be what it is now - delivering Newsletters and maybe collecting subs (if there is to be one). But it could be a slightly extended role of actually becoming a NW coordinator for your road under an umbrella organisation of a Druid Fountain Residents' Association which also oversees the Neighbourhood Watch in each constituent street as part of its role. So something to think about. If you do not feel you could manage the latter please say so.”</p>	
7	<p>AOB: Stephanie French asked for the e mail addresses of those who had attended the meeting. About half of the folk present gave their e mail addresses and by the end of the day these had been passed to the Chair and Secretary of the Steering Group and to Mark Stickland who still holds the current list previously acquired.</p>	
8	<p>DONM: Who can answer that?</p>	
9	<p>The Meeting closed at 4.15 pm.</p>	